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## **IPB Statement: The Urgent Need for Deescalation to Prevent Nuclear Disaster**

- 27 February, 2023

Russia's suspension of the New START Treaty marks the latest in the dangerous and irresponsible escalation of nuclear threats since the invasion of Ukraine one year ago. The rapid deterioration of diplomatic relations between Russia and the West, alongside the intensification of the war in Ukraine and Russia's previous nuclear threats must serve as a wake-up call to the world: we are closer than we have ever been to nuclear annihilation.

Just prior to the Russian invasion, in January 2022, the leaders of the five nuclear-weapon states reiterated what we all know to be true: a nuclear war must not be fought and cannot be won. Instead of taking this message to heart, Russia and the West continue to rely on nuclear deterrence as a fundamental strategy for their foreign policies, including as a shield for their imperialist ventures. Both sides are guilty of eroding the nuclear arms control regime established during the Cold War – visits to US nuclear sites under New START were likewise restricted by sanctions against Russia. The threat of the use of nuclear weapons is now higher than at any point in history since the Cuban Missile Crisis.

The International Peace Bureau calls again for an immediate ceasefire in Ukraine and for all involved parties to engage in negotiations to bring the violence and bloodshed to an end. We demand that negotiations include the security concerns of Ukrainians, Russians, and Western governments to rely on common security and to immediately resume the New START treaty, as well as to work for the re-establishment of further nuclear arms control and trust-building treaties, in line with the principles of common security.

Furthermore, IPB calls for an end to the expensive modernization of nuclear weapons – a multi-billion dollar project that does nothing to ensure security – and for all nations to support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons for a safer, nuclear-free future.

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